IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as indicated below:

1. (Currently Amended): An on-line attenuation device for monomode fibres, characterised in that it has, placed between **and physically connected to,** two monomode fibres (1n, 2n), at least one attenuating element comprising at least one section of multimode fibre with an index gradient (Gn) ~~and~~ **connected to** at least one section of silica fibre without a core (In).

2. (Currently Amended): An on-line attenuation device ~~according to Claim 1, characterised in that the attenuation element includes~~ **for monomode fibres, characterised in that it has, placed between two monomode fibres (1n, 2n), at least one attenuating element comprising at least one section of multimode fibre with an index gradient (Gn), at least one section of silica fibre without a core (In), and** at least one other section of silica fibre without a core (Jn), the section of fibre with an index gradient (Gn) being placed between the sections of silica fibre without a core (In, Jn).

3. (Currently Amended): An on-line attenuation device according to claim 1, characterised in that**, at both connections between the attenuating element and one of the monomode fibres,** the attenuating element has **an external geometrical shape that is the same as an external geometrical shape of the one of** ~~the same external geometrical parameters as~~ the monomode fibres to which it is connected.

4. (Currently Amended): An on-line attenuation device according to Claim 3, characterised in that ~~the connection consists in a welding of the ends of the fibres opposite each other~~ **both connections are formed by welding**.

5. (Previously Presented): An on-line attenuation device according to claim 1, characterised in that it comprises a plurality of attenuating elements (A) disposed so as to

form a ribbon or a block so as to be placed between ribbons of monomode fibres (R_{1M}, R_{2M}).

6. (Currently Amended): A method of manufacturing an on-line attenuation device for monomode fibres, ~~characterised in that it consists in successively performing steps of~~ **comprising the steps of** connecting **the end of a fibre ribbon with the end of another fibre ribbon** and breaking **the connected** fibre ribbons **at a location other than the connection point between them, and repeating the steps of connecting and breaking,** so as to obtain **a continuous fibre ribbon including** two ~~ribbons~~ **sections** of monomode fibres (R_{1M}, R_{2M}) connected through the attenuation device which is obtained by breaking at least one ribbon of fibres with an index gradient (RG) and connecting to at least one broken ribbon of silica fibres without a core (R_S).

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7. (Currently Amended): A method of manufacturing an on-line attenuation device for monomode fibres ~~according to Claim 6, characterised in that it~~ **comprising the steps of connecting and breaking fibre ribbons so as to obtain two ribbons of monomode fibres (R_{1M}, R_{2M}) connected through the attenuation device which is obtained by breaking at least one ribbon of fibres with an index gradient (RG) and connecting to at least one broken ribbon of silica fibres without a core (R_S) and further** includes the breaking of another ribbon of silica fibres without a core (R_S) and the connection to the broken ribbon of fibres with an index gradient (RG) **that is** thus placed between two ribbons of silica fibre without a core.

8. (Currently Amended): A method of manufacturing an on-line attenuation device for monomode fibres, according to claim 6, characterised in that it includes the following steps:

- collectively connecting a ribbon of n monomode fibres with an index gradient (RG) to a ribbon of n silica fibres without a core (R_S);

- breaking the ribbon of n silica fibres without a core (R_S) so as to obtain n sections (In) of predetermined length (Ls),

- collectively connecting a ribbon of n monomode fibres (R_{1M}) to the n sections of silica without a core (In),

- breaking the ribbon of n multimode fibres with an index gradient (RG) so as to obtain n sections (Gn) of predetermined length (Lg), **and**

- collectively connecting a ribbon of n monomode fibres (R_{2M}) to the n sections with an index gradient (Gn).

9. (Currently Amended): A method of manufacturing an on-line attenuation device for monomode fibres, according to Claim ~~8, characterised in that the last step is replaced by the following steps~~ **6, characterised in that it includes the following steps:**

- collectively connecting a ribbon of n monomode fibres with an index gradient (RG) to a ribbon of n silica fibres without a core (R_S);

- breaking the ribbon of n silica fibres without a core (R_S) so as to obtain n sections (In) of predetermined length (Ls),

- collectively connecting a ribbon of n monomode fibres (R_{1M}) to the n sections of silica without a core (In),

- breaking the ribbon of n multimode fibres with an index gradient (RG) so as to obtain n sections (Gn) of predetermined length (Lg),

- collectively connecting a ribbon of n silica fibres without a core (R_S) to the n sections with an index gradient (Gn),

- breaking the ribbon of n silica fibres without a core (R_S) so as to obtain n sections (Jn) of predetermined length (L's), **and**

- collectively connecting a ribbon of n monomode fibres (R_{2M}) to the n sections of silica without a core (Jn).